

**BEFORE THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

In the Matter of the Application Of Southwest Gas Corporation for Authority to Adjust Public Purpose Program Surcharges. (U 905 G)	Application 02-07-009 (Filed July 1, 2002)
In the Matter of the Application of PACIFICORP for Approval of Post-2002 Low-Income Energy Efficiency Program and CARE Program Funding.	Application 02-07-013 (Filed July 1, 2002)
IN THE MATTER of the Application of SIERRA PACIFIC POWER COMPANY (U903) for an Order Approving Its Low-Income Public Purpose Program Plan and Budget.	Application 02-07-016 (Filed July 2, 2002)
In the Matter of the Application of Southern California Water Company (U 133 E) Regarding Low-Income Assistance Programs for its Bear Valley Electric Service Customers for Program Year 2003.	Application 02-07-017 (Filed July 3, 2002)
Application of Avista Corporation dba Avista Utilities regarding its 2003 Program Year Plan and Budgets for C.A.R.E. and L.I.E.E.	Application 02-07-018 (Filed July 2, 2002)

**ASSIGNED COMMISSIONER'S RULING ESTABLISHING CATEGORY  
AND PROVIDING SCOPING MEMO**

Pursuant to Rules 6(c)(2) and 6.3 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, this ruling designates the category of this proceeding, addresses the need for hearings, and also provides a scoping memo confirming and clarifying the issues and schedule discussed at the prehearing conference (PHC) held on July 22, 2002.<sup>1</sup>

### **Scoping**

This proceeding will address the program year (PY) 2003 low-income assistance programs and budgets of Southwest Gas Corporation (Southwest Gas), PacifiCorp, Sierra Pacific Power Company (Sierra Pacific), Bear Valley Electric (Bear Valley) and Avista Corporation (Avista), collectively "the utilities." These programs consist of rate discounts, referred to as the California Alternate Rates For Energy (CARE) program, and direct weatherization and energy efficiency services, referred to as the Low Income Energy Efficiency (LIEE) program. Penetration goals for the CARE program will be considered as part of the PY2003 program plans.

As discussed at the PHC, Bear Valley is requesting an extension to its approved PY2002 program plans to continue the authorized activities through 2003, with no change in funding. The Executive Director has extended the contract with Bear Valley. Therefore, no further Commission action is needed on Bear Valley's program plans at this time.

Per the Joint Assigned Commissioners' Ruling in R.01-08-027, dated April 19, 2002 (Joint Ruling), Sierra Pacific removed from its general rate case

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<sup>1</sup> The PHC was held in Rulemaking (R.) 01-08-027, our generic proceeding covering utility low-income assistance programs. By subsequent ruling, dated August 7, 2002, the above-captioned applications were consolidated into a separate proceeding.

(Application (A.) 01-06-041) the program plans and budgets for CARE and LIEE, and filed them in this proceeding. However, in addition, Sierra Pacific submitted its general rate case proposal for energy efficiency programs to non-low income customers. As discussed at the PHC, only Sierra Pacific's CARE and LIEE programs will be considered here. Any rate changes for Sierra Pacific that result from this proceeding will be consolidated with rate changes that are authorized in A.01-06-041.

### **Categorization**

This proceeding was preliminarily categorized as a ratesetting proceeding. There have been no objections to this categorization, and I concur with it. This represents the ruling on categorization under Rule 6(a)(3), and it may be appealed under Rule 6.4.

### **Need For Hearings**

By ALJ Resolutions 176-3091 and 176-3092, the Commission preliminarily determined that hearings would be needed to address the issues in this proceeding. At the PHC, all parties supported addressing these applications via the workshop and comment process outlined in the Joint Ruling. Based on those discussions, and the fact that no protests or comments have been filed in response to the utilities' applications, I find that hearings will not be necessary to resolve the issues.

### **Schedule**

The Joint Ruling directed Energy Division to hold workshops on the utilities' applications and prepare a final workshop report by September 5, 2002. Based on that ruling, the schedule is as follows:

Energy Division Workshops	August 15, 2002
Energy Division Report	September 5, 2002
Comments on Report	September 25, 2002
Draft Decision issued for Comment	October 22, 2002

It is my intent to have a draft decision on the agenda for the Commission's consideration for the November 21, 2002 Commission Conference. In no event will the resolution of this case exceed 18 months from the date the application was filed.

**IT IS RULED** that:

1. This is a ratesetting proceeding.
2. No evidentiary hearing is necessary to resolve the issues in this proceeding.
3. The scope of this proceeding is as described in this ruling.
4. The schedule for this matter is as described in this ruling.

Dated August 21, 2002, at San Francisco, California.

/s/ CARL WOOD

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Carl Wood  
Assigned Commissioner

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I certify that I have by mail this day served a true copy of the original attached Assigned Commissioner's Ruling Establishing Category and Providing Scoping Memo on all parties of record in this proceeding or their attorneys of record.

Dated August 21, 2002, at San Francisco, California.

/s/ FANNIE SID

Fannie Sid

**N O T I C E**

Parties should notify the Process Office, Public Utilities Commission, 505 Van Ness Avenue, Room 2000, San Francisco, CA 94102, of any change of address to insure that they continue to receive documents. You must indicate the proceeding number on the service list on which your name appears.